

the Alliance Weekly

AUGUST 8, 1956

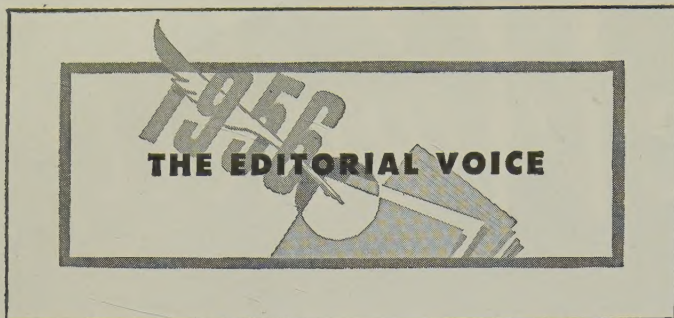


GOVERNMENT PALACE, QUITO, ECUADOR

In this issue

THE HEART OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE

By Dr. Ralph G. Turnbull



THE CAUSES OF RELIGIOUS CONFUSION

1. *Those Confused Intellectuals*

We human beings can get confused so easily that it might almost be said that we brought into the world with us an inborn ability to get mixed up.

It is a bit disconcerting to note that religion as it is understood and practiced generally among allegedly civilized men, instead of clearing up our heads and putting things back in focus, appears actually to add to the number of things to get confused about.

Now I well know that "pure religion and undefiled" is a clarifying and sobering agent. Christ reduced all commandments to one—that is, the love of God and man. He was Himself the simplest and most unified Man that ever lived, and always He saw things steadily and saw them whole. Except for that one awful moment in the garden when He prayed in an agony of bloody sweat, He evinced no trace of perplexity throughout His entire life. His heart was aglow with a love so warm that it drove out fear from the hearts of his hearers and drew to Him the weak, the timid and the self-condemned; yet for all the hot fire in His heart His mind was completely cool. Under every stress and pressure He was poised, calm and self-assured. He contributed nothing to the world's confusion, but He has done much to dispel it.

Having as the High Priest of our profession the incarnation of all divine wisdom and having as our source book of religious knowledge the Holy Scriptures, the soundest and saltiest work ever written, why do we tend so easily to become confused about things spiritual? I believe the causes are four, and I propose to state them in this and next week's editorials.

The first cause of religious confusion is our failure to understand that the truth as it is in Christ Jesus is a moral and spiritual thing and not something intellectual merely. Let a man approach the burning bush of divine truth with the desire to grasp it in his hand and the intensity of the fire will blind his eyes and cauterize his hands and face to the point of insensibility. Before the awesome vision of revealed truth the human intellect should kneel and hide its face in trembling adoration. Because Moses was afraid to look upon God the Lord could speak to him face to face as a man speaks to his friend; but God hides His face from the man who does not instinctively hide his own.

Intellectual pride, then, with its corollary, irreverence, is one cause of religious confusion. Satan's original doctrine, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing," has been accepted by millions of religious persons through the centuries and commands a big following today even among professedly orthodox Christians. In spite of all Christ said while among men and all His inspired apostles wrote after His ascension, we seem never to learn that the inner essence of truth cannot be apprehended by the mental faculties. We still come at the awesome supernatural reality headfirst.

There has emerged lately in American Christianity a school of religious thought conceived in intellectual pride and dedicated to the proposition that everything of value in the Christian faith can be reduced to philosophical terms and understood by the human mind. The notion seems to be that anything God can utter we can comprehend, allowing possibly for the need of a little divine aid with the heavier stuff.

The brethren who are promoting this movement seem to feel that the trouble with evangelicalism is that it is not scholarly enough, that it cannot state itself in scientific terms. They appear to be chagrined by the chuckles of the learned liberals at the allegedly ignorant fundamentalists and have been needled into an attempt to prove that we evangelicals are not so dumb after all. They hope to make their point by equating Christian theology with Greek philosophy and the findings of modern science, and demonstrating that if the truth were known the Christian revelation is just good clean reason, nothing more. I pass over the pretty obvious fact that there is in all this more than a trace of the taint of mind-worship. And am I just seeing things or do I detect a deep and painful inferiority complex on the part of these apostles of evangelical-rationalism? But I won't call attention to it. I know how they feel.

Well, I believe these brethren are wrong. I believe they are as badly mixed up and confused as the peddlers of old wives' tales of Paul's day or the snake handlers of our own Ozark Mountains—only, of course, in a different and more respectable way. If they succeed in reducing Christianity to a philosophical proposition they will do more damage to the true faith of Christ than liberalism, Catholicism and Communism combined.

But there is some hope. Invariably the newly learned, like the newly rich, overdo everything, and that is just what the evangelical-rationalists are doing. They forget that Moses, David, our blessed Lord Himself, John, Luther, Wesley, Bunyan, Schopenhauer, William James (to bring together a few very different but very effective teachers), could state their doctrines in language as simple as childhood talk and as clear as distilled water. These modern teachers aren't so easy to comprehend. They write in an academic jargon that only another of them can understand. At the rate they are going it will take at least one generation for their teaching to filter down to the man on the street and the worshiper in the pew. And maybe that is good after all.



Long Lake, Wisc.

"For summer joy in field and wood, we lift our song to Him."

LOUIS C. WILLIAMS

The Heart of the Christian Message

By DR. RALPH G. TURNBULL

Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Seattle, Wash.

TWO hundred years ago an English merchant visited Scotland and on his return related that he had heard three preachers in the course of his travels. "The first," said he, "Robert Blair, showed me the majesty of God; the second, Samuel Rutherford, showed me the loveliness of Christ; and the third, Andrew Dickson, showed me all my heart!"

If I were asked to set forth the Christian message as I understand it, these are the notes I would stress. These are foundational truths in the Christian revelation.

THE MAJESTY OF GOD

Without God this is a tragic world. Nothing but God can save us. Many today feel that they live in a time of darkness. Confusion and distress fall upon our spirits as we look around a distracted world. It is

here we need anew the soul-refreshing view of God. Evil passions and worldly ambitions blind many, and their inadequate and distorted looks at God have meant imperfect ways of life.

Now the One we worship and adore is not imprisoned within His universe. Neither is He at the mercy of men's capricious whims nor to be set aside lightly by ignoring Him, for He has not left Himself without witness. We see the majesty of God around us. Nature manifests His glory and power, and

*"Every flower is a hint of His beauty,
Every grain of wheat a token of His
beneficence,
Every blade of grass a revelation of
His power."*

Jonathan Edwards experienced it, walking alone in his father's pasture,

looking up at the sky and the clouds: "There came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious majesty and grace of God, that I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction, majesty and meekness joined together; it was a sweet and gentle and holy majesty and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high and great and holy gentleness." Reflecting upon the vastness of sea and sky and mountain, who among us has not been awed by the vision splendid so that we have realized the greatness of the Creator?

Then in history and in providence we have found Him, as a Moses at the burning bush, a Job in the crucible of suffering, and countless others unnamed who have turned to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let Isaiah the prophet

testify as he finds himself in the House of God. "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." The vision of the seraphic creatures and the music of their refrain overwhelmed him as they cried, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." It was in the consciousness of that majesty of God that he knew his need of cleansing and renewal before he engaged upon the service of the Most High.

Have you ever thought that to lose this sense of the holiness of God is greatly to impoverish ourselves? God is sovereign; His government is righteous, and His majesty gracious. Without this reverence for Him man is easily and cheaply undervalued, for we are made in His image and after His likeness. The rights of individual man are being set aside in our day because of this. Liberty of conscience and true freedom come by the mind and will of God alone. A lofty view of God brings a lofty view of the dignity and worth of personality. But never forget that the sanctions of authority, the sources of civilization and the security of peace are in jeopardy when this majesty is flouted!

Do not let the present talk about world conditions, however necessary, stupefy you. There is Another,

greater than the demagogues of earth. The last word is with "the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth." If only the nations returned to God and walked in His ways! Then we should have no dread of the future if we were morally sound and healthy at home.

Secularism does not make for the sanctities of life, but spiritual, heartfelt worship is God's way. Worship in the beauty of holiness issues in character attuned to noble ends. A vision of the character of God, His holiness, His righteousness, His tenderness, His uncompromising hostility to sin, His undying compassion and grace for the sinner: to be caught up with this vision is to be no longer cocksure or presumptuous. What a difference to us when we see the majesty of God, for "the one fact is God, all other things are circumstances," and "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

THE LOVELINESS OF CHRIST

It is Keats who sings that "a thing of beauty is a joy forever." Then this claim for the Son of God must surely stand as supreme. The petals of Love's flower do not wither and the fragrance never ceases, for He is alone and superior. To be brought face to face with Him is to find ourselves disclosed to ourselves: we see what we are in essential nature. When we compare ourselves with others, be they friends or enemies, it is easy to pride ourselves that we are not as other men are or that we are as good as others. The standard is not very high and not flattering to pride.

But bring your life to this standard—"the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ"—and at once you know that Peter's cry was a true reflex of that blinding loveliness: "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Our hidden sins are seen in the light of that blaze of glory. The ancient world knew nothing of this until Christ came; the modern world is in danger of forgetting to look into the mirror. Look now and see what you are. You are not what you might be; you are not what you ought to be; you are not what you can be by the grace of God.

Remember that the essence of Christ's life was holiness, that which was wholesome and complete, revealing the glory of God to man. Truth and grace were perfectly balanced in His nature. Truth strengthens grace and grace mellows truth. Think of His actions, how gracious; His speech, how kindly; His spirit, how beneficent. See Him setting a child in the midst of disputing, ambitious men; washing the feet of the arrogant and proud; forgiving the sinner, praying until His countenance was transfigured. Are not these, and much beside, intimations of splendor which reveals our ugliness and imperfection? Surely we yearn to cultivate character after this pattern by the intimacy and communion He offers to us in the gospel.

It was Tertullian who said: "Jesus turns all our sunsets into sunrises." He who will take time to enter upon this experience will be richly rewarded. But to see all this it is necessary to pause. Life that is not inspired by the divine splendor spends little time in awe and reverence, and such wonder is the beginning of worship.

*"How beautiful, how beautiful
The sight of Thee must be,
Thine endless wisdom, boundless
power,
And awful purity!"*

Thus sang Faber in his spiritual ecstasy of beholding the glory of Jesus.

Our Lord claims supremacy because He is love. We can do nothing, we are nothing without Him. He is the Key to life's unsearchable riches; He is the Door to the abundant life; He is the Way to completeness, for He is the Light of life, the Revealer of the snares and chasms that lurk in darkness, the Rebuker of every evil thing, the Stillor of the stormwinds of passion, the Quickener of all that is beautiful, the Reconciler of contradictions, the Harmonizer of discords, the only Saviour from sin. He is the Love that never lets us go; therefore, see the loveliness of Jesus, and "follow after love."

ALL MY HEART

This vision comes inevitably to one who has seen the majesty of God
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VOLUME 91 NUMBER 32

the Alliance Weekly

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Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Harrisburg, Pa. Published weekly by Christian Publications, Inc.

Subscriptions: United States and Canada, \$2.00; Foreign, \$2.75. Address correspondence on editorial matters to THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY, 260 W. 44th St., New York 36, N. Y.; regarding subscriptions, Third and Reily Sts., Harrisburg, Pa.

When requesting change of address kindly give both old and new address to insure proper mailing.
(Printed in U. S. A.)

The Will of God

By REV. ROBERT W. BATTLES

Pastor, Orlando, Florida

WE cannot delight ourselves in doing anything to which we have never given thought. If doing God's will is irksome, if tedium, boredom and the pedestrian trudge mark the tempo of our Christian experience, we are living far beneath our privileges in Christ Jesus. It is God's intention that doing His will should be our delight. Just as our Saviour joyously took up the work of the cross to accomplish our eternal salvation and our sanctification, our lives should be joyously carrying out the will of God.

Christ is identified in the Book of Hebrews (chapter 10) as the One speaking in the fortieth psalm. There He is represented as saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (verse 8). Jesus not only did the Father's will but He found delight in so doing. Though it was His portion to endure that baptism of the nameless agony of Gethsemane, yet out of the inky blackness of that garden came the pledge: "Not my will, but thine, be done." It was "for the joy that was set before him" that He endured the cross. This was His Father's will, and His delight in doing it swallowed up all considerations of personal suffering.

This attitude goes far beyond mere formal devotion. Current concepts of loyalty to ideals, persons and organizations appear anemic by comparison. Christ's was not a blind allegiance but an intelligent confidence that God's will merited His absolute obedience even though from an earthly viewpoint the results threatened ruin.

On the occasion when Jesus sat wearily beside Jacob's well and the disciples went to purchase food, He revealed Himself to a woman of Samaria as the supplier of "water" of such quality that anyone who

drank of it should never thirst again. As she was leaving to tell the news of this Prophet to her neighbors, the disciples returned. Jesus was so visibly refreshed that they questioned among themselves as to who might have given Him something to eat. He noticed their bewilderment and said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). Have you tasted that kind of meat and drink? Have you concerned yourself to discover and do the will of God? It is ours to know and to do the will of God, not in the formal detached sense that is convenient and easy, but in the deep, hearty sense so that it becomes our chief delight.

God has clearly revealed His will in such a way that His rational creatures illuminated by the Holy Ghost may clearly know it. And when we are minded to do His will His grace gives the enabling. We



The Will of God

*I worship thee, sweet Will of God!
And all thy ways adore,
And every day I live I seem
To love thee more and more.*

*Thou wert the end, the blessed rule
Of our Saviour's toils and tears;
Thou wert the passion of His heart
Those three-and-thirty years.*

*And He hath breathed into my soul
A special love of thee,
A love to lose my will in His,
And by that loss be free.*

*He always wins who sides with God,
To him no chance is lost;
God's will is sweetest to him when
It triumphs at his cost.*

*Ill that He blesses is our good,
And unblest good is ill;
And all is right that seems most wrong,
If it be His sweet Will!*

—F. W. FABER.

then have the equipment, not only for knowing but also for doing the will of God. "If any man will do his will, he shall know" (John 7:17). That is the secret of having a genuine relish for the will of God.

In Hebrews where the portion from Psalm 40 is quoted, a verse in the context reads, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (10:10). The words "Lo, I come," suggest the focus of His intention as He left the ivory palaces to enter a world weighted and blighted by sin. What a prospect that God should come in condescending love to share with His creatures the limitations of a fleshly tabernacle! What are we or what do we possess that we should hesitate to likewise choose the will of God for ourselves? Do we fear to commit ourselves into His gracious hands? Do we prefer the crumbling and transient securities of this earth?

The things of this life thrust themselves unbidden upon our attention and demand our labors. Spiritual considerations await our earnest search. God does not intrude upon those who are unwilling to pay heed. To miss His will we do not have to rebelliously reject it. All we need to do is neglect the Word through which He is pleased to reveal Himself to us. Those who take pains to know the will of God will come to that delightful place which David knew. But here, as in many other areas of our Christian experience,

*"The lack of desire is the ill of all
ills;*

*Many thousands through it the dark
pathway have trod."*

Can you say or do you want to be able to say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God"?

The Heart of the Message

(Continued from page 4)

and the beauty of Jesus. Here we are startled by the stark, tragic fact of sin. You know it when it is your own. Some are blind to it; others are prone to talk it out of court. Take a white dog, spotlessly clean, for a walk when there has been a fall of snow, or take out a clean white pocket handkerchief; compared with the pristine whiteness of the snow, the dog and the bit of linen appear drab and dirty. Before Jesus Christ we see ourselves as sinners needing a Saviour and realize we have come short of the glory of God.

The language of those who confess this experience is revealing in its intensity and power. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ." Thus speaks Paul the apostle. When you analyze yourself and report upon your heart this is how it is expressed, "We can't understand what we are doing, for we do not do what we want to do, and we do the things we hate." *There is the bondage and tyranny of sin.*

Sin is not mere ignorance, else education would remove it; it is not a casual infirmity, else science would overcome it; but it is a deep-seated malady of human nature. Sin is the great leveler and there is a solidarity of the race in its brotherhood of sin. Its essence is pride and rebellion against God. The expression varies in man; as the cunning devilishness of hell is prostituting the gifts of creation to base ends of destruction, so the fear of man enslaves multitudes. "Sin crouches at the door" of all world-wide and personal problems. The world is lawless because individuals express the heart which is not right with God.

The bankruptcy of life is manifested in all ages. An Augustine cries, "O foolish man that I am . . . all things look ghastly . . . O madness!" His *Confessions* witness to the desperate and deceitful state of human nature. And Bunyan confessed, "Poor wretch as I was, I was all this while ignorant of Jesus Christ and going about to establish my own righteousness." His *Grace Abound-*

ing is a revelation of "all my heart."

No one can save himself or save the race but the God of glory who is also the God of grace. This gospel is adequate today for the ills and diseases of the soul. As you recognize the need, you are invited and drawn by the attractiveness of the Son of God to an experience. It is the oldest, the most important, the most universal, the most profitable of all the sciences—the science of personal religion, the experience of sins forgiven, a cleansed life, a divine nature imparted, a new mastery by One who was impaled upon a cross and who lives eternally as Lord of life. At the cross we see the manifestation of the majesty of God and the beauty of Christ in satisfying the heart of a man. In that sacrifice, richer far than anything human, the God-Man manifests His glory and displays His grace.

This is the gospel which we bring to you. Nothing greater can be offered in this life. The preacher tells of what he knows experientially and speaks of that which he has seen. A verdict is asked; you must give answer. How do you relate yourself to the eternal and abiding realities? Is God far away from you or have you been conscious of His nearness in the disclosure of His majesty? Have you been uncertain about Christ or have you

felt the attractiveness and beauty of His person and grace? Does the consciousness of your own lack and failure in heart accuse you as one who has missed the glory of God and failed to find salvation? Then this is the hour for your choice. "As many as received him [Christ], to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

The gospel I declare to you has these three notes producing the music and melody of redemption, and offering to you the glory and grace of new life.

Oh, could I tell, ye surely would believe it!

Oh, could I only say what I have seen! How should I tell or how can ye receive it,

How, till He bringeth you where I have been?

Yes, thro' life, death, thro' sorrow and thro' sinning

He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed:

Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,

Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

—St. Paul, by F. W. H. MEYER.

Thus we invite you to believe the gospel of majesty, loveliness, fullness.

God Should Be Praised

Should an angel who knew nothing of our characters, but who had heard of the blessings which God has bestowed on us, visit this world, would he not expect to find every part of it resounding with the praises of God and His love? Would he not expect to hear old and young, parents and children, all blessing God for the glad tidings of the gospel and crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David"? How then would he be grieved and disappointed! How astonished to find that Being whom he had ever heard praised in the most rapturous strains by all the bright armies of heaven, slighted, disobeyed and dishonored by His creatures on earth! Would you not be ashamed, would you not blush to look such a visitor in the face? To tell him how little you have done for God, tell him that you are not one of His servants? Oh, then, let us strive to wipe away this foul stain, this disgrace to our race and our world. Let not this world be the only place, except hell, where God is not praised. Let us not be the only creatures, except devils, who refuse to praise Him.—E. PAYSON.



DAVID R. ENLOW, Editor

AT HOME

Knoxville playgrounds have Bible story program: Bible stories form an integral part of the recreational program on sixteen white and five Negro playgrounds in Knoxville, Tenn., this summer for the fourth straight year. The Bible story playground program is sponsored by the Knoxville and Knox County Council of United Church Women. Individual congregations are responsible for it at some playgrounds and council members at others.

Hit airlines' agreement to restrict drinking: A voluntary agreement among domestic trunkline air carriers not to serve more than two alcoholic drinks to a customer and not to advertise the availability of cocktails on flights was announced at Washington, D. C., by Stuart G. Tipton, president of the Air Transport Association. The Methodist Board of Temperance immediately characterized the action, taken as the House of Representatives was about to consider legislation banning liquor on aircraft, as "patently an effort to head off enactment of the bill."

Form Appalachian Religious Workers Conference: An Appalachian Religious Workers Conference was formed at Berea, Ky., by representatives of eight Protestant denominations. The conference will study the conditions of people in the mountains and see what the churches can do to help them. The new organization was created at the end of a five-day meeting of mountain religious workers. A grant of \$200,000 will be sought from some foundation for a study of the economic, health, education and religious needs of the people.

Hoover urges religious probation officers: Children in danger of becoming juvenile delinquents ought to have "religious probation officer," former President Herbert Hoover said in an interview at San Francisco. Pointing to weak home life as a source of much delinquency, he said: "Religious organizations ought to see what they can do in broken homes and about disturbed home conditions wherever the conditions appear."

Chicago parents establish Christian academy: A group of parents in Chicago have announced plans to open a new Christian academy next September "because of

the crying need for schools which are Christian in teachings and in actions." To be known as Midwestern Christian Academy, the new school is sponsored by Midwest Bible Church. Rev. Dick Wagner, youth director of the church, will be acting principal until a permanent one is named. The school will open with one hundred students in the first eight grades, plus kindergarten classes. The academy will be affiliated with the National Association of Christian Schools. Its curriculum, as announced, will be "equal or superior" to other grade schools.

ABROAD

Warns report would encourage heathenism: A leading Dutch Reformed theologian warned at Capetown, South Africa, that proposals in a government report would result in a "return to heathenism" among South Africa's 12,000,000 Bantus (Negroes). Dr. Barend J. Marais, professor of theology at the University of Pretoria, attacked recommendations in the Tomlinson Report calling for development of the Bantus "along their own lines and against their own background."

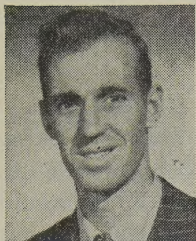
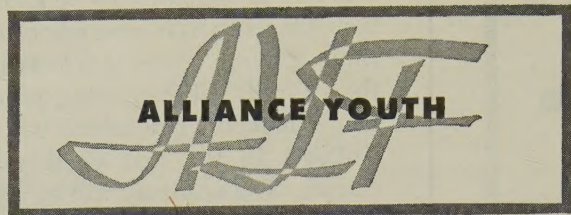
United Presbyterians bow to new Egyptian law: The American Mission in Egypt, a United Presbyterian group, announced in Cairo that its eleven schools will comply with the new Egyptian law which requires all Christian schools to teach the Islamic religion to their Moslem students. The decision was announced after two secretaries of the Board of Foreign Missions of the United Presbyterian Church had conferred with government officials on the matter.

PEOPLE SAY

Robert Cook, President of Youth for Christ: "There is a great movement toward constructive living and good citizenship," he said. "The postwar upheaval, which always expresses itself in crime and dissolute living, is apparently spending itself, at least as far as youth is concerned, and there is a growing seriousness about life and its purposes."

Dr. Teofile Ortiz Ramirez, Mexican heart specialist: "The heart patient—or the person who does not want ever to suffer from heart disease—should live day by day and hand in hand with God. There is no medicine like Christian confidence."

Chaplain Howard Blandeau, of Iowa State Training School for Boys, Eldora, Ia.: "The Christian home is the only means to effectively reduce delinquency in this country to the near-vanishing point. Out of 1,500 of these delinquents I have dealt with, not more than fifteen came from thoroughly Christian homes where the parents were truly devoted to God and their families and where both the father and the mother were active in church."



Mr. Leastman

The Unfinished Furrow

By REV. H. BRUCE LEASTMAN, Sidney, Montana

"No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

The Israelites were largely an agricultural people, and in teaching them Jesus many times used rustic terms to set forth deep spiritual truths. While Christ was on earth He selected plowmen to labor in His kingdom. Today He is still seeking and selecting plowmen to work with Him. The place of our labor might differ, but Christ is still calling young people to plow, to harrow, to sow the seed and to help reap the harvest. The psalmist has said, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

In chapter nine of the Gospel of Luke there are four plowmen mentioned. In verse 57 we see the *rash plowman*. He is the man who had observed Christ's ministry and who had no doubt seen many miracles performed. Just a short time before, Christ had cast a legion of demons out of a man bound by Satan. No doubt the plowman had seen, or at least heard, that Jairus' daughter had been raised to life, and also about the miracle Christ had performed in the desert place as He fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes. To this plowman the call was to popularity. His emotions were stirred, and he wanted to be with the popular crowd. He applied for work and was told by Jesus the things he must expect: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

This rash plowman was given a plot of ground to plow and started his work. His plow cut a furrow but a short way when suddenly it struck a stone, the stone of prayerlessness. Then he soon struck another stone, that of unbelief, then the stone of indifference. Finally, after striking the roots of criticism, he said to himself, "I can't go on." So unhitching his team and leaving his plow in the field, he went back to his old life, leaving behind a hideous, unfinished furrow.

In verse 59 we see the *entangled plowman*. He too wanted to work in the field of the Master. He applied for work and was given a task to complete. He entered his plow and started across the field. As he went on he saw in the distance the beautiful home of a friend, a new car standing in the driveway. Looking back, he started to count the cost. "I will never save enough to buy some of the better things of life, working at this job. I think it would be best for me to go home and care for my aged father." He stopped his team, unhitched them from the plow and went to his aged father, leaving behind him an unfinished furrow also.

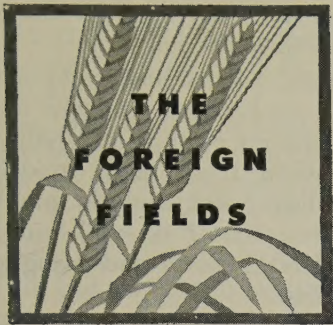
In verse 61 another plowman applies for work. He is the *wavering plowman*. He applied for work, but all of the time he doubted his call. He, like the other plowmen, started to plow, but the more stones and roots he struck the more certain he was that he had never been called to plow for the Master. Deciding

it was time to go bid his friends goodbye and seek other employment, he too unhitched his team and went to his friends, leaving in the field yet another unfinished furrow.

In verse 51 we meet a different Plowman. This is the *Faithful Plowman*. The furrow of this Plowman began in the manger of Bethlehem and worked its way through a life of hardships, poverty and persecution. His plow struck many stones but in verse 51 we still see much determination. "He stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." The hardest plowing was yet to be done. On the Faithful Plowman went, into the city of Jerusalem, cutting a most difficult furrow through the garden into the judgment hall, and finally up Calvary's hill. On went the Faithful Plowman even into the grave, and finally, the third day, He came forth and ascended to the right hand of the Father, ever to make intercession for the saints.

Young people, Christ set the example as to what kind of plowman you ought to be. Christ wants young people who will sink their plow into the ground in the field of their calling and never look back. Several years ago, while I was on the farm, my father sent me out to plow in a field. I entered my plow and started the team moving across the field. When I had gone a quarter of the way across, I looked to see if my furrow was straight, and it was and I was well pleased. Half-way across I looked again; to my surprise the furrow had a terrible curve in it just where I had first looked back. By the time I reached the other side of the field I had cut the furrow so crooked it could never be straightened out. I called my grandfather and asked him what was wrong. He said, "Son, you should not look back. See that tree on the other side of the field? Fix your eyes on that tree and plow toward it and do not take your eyes off that tree until you reach the other side." I took his advice and my furrow was as straight as could be.

Young friend, Jesus is beckoning you on. If you would succeed as a plowman in His kingdom, you must fix your eyes upon Him and never look back.



Unprecedented Opportunities in Viet Nam

God through His blessed Holy Spirit is this year granting unprecedented opportunities for preaching the gospel to multitudes in Viet Nam.

In Central Viet Nam this unusual liberty is in direct contrast to the former political regime. Open-air meetings are being conducted systematically by gospel teams. Many of the pastors have divided their area into zones and are striving to reach every village and hamlet. A strategic center which had been under the control of the Viet Minh forces for the past nine years was reopened and there is now a congregation of believers meeting together and supporting their pastor. After an absence of fifteen years a

missionary couple has been able to re-establish residence in the former capital city of Hué. This district reaches up to the 17th parallel, with a population of hundreds of thousands.

Still another indisputable evidence of open doors and open hearts is the glorious result of one of the many evangelistic tours in South Viet Nam, when the news that "Jesus saves" was sounded forth in three languages—Vietnamese, Cambodian and Chinese. Eighty persons prayed the penitent's prayer. These abundant results are being duplicated throughout the country.

In the south, Saigon particularly, the preaching of the gospel in prisons, military camps, hospitals and refugee centers has resulted in turning hundreds of darkened, sin-burdened souls to Jesus. The Bible Correspondence Course, published by the Orient Crusades, together with our own publications has played a vital role in the follow-up program of building up these newborn babes in the most holy faith. Refugees and churches have received material and financial aid from various Christian organizations in America and in Europe as well as from our own Society.

On April 1 the national church took a step forward when they again assumed self-support. This was part-

ly an outcome of the Southeast Asia Conference in Bangkok last November.

The radio ministry furnishes an effective avenue for presenting the gospel to vast numbers of listeners. Twenty-three programs a week are broadcast, twenty-one from Far East Broadcasting Company in Manila and two originating within the country.

This year the Bible Institute at Danang (Tourane) had the largest enrollment since 1940, fifty-eight students, 100 per cent increase over last year. Of this number over half were women, most of them unmarried. Formerly the student body consisted almost entirely of married couples. Interested friends in Switzerland, Canada and Madagascar assisted the school financially this year.

Regular gifts from the Bible Meditation League and World Wide Prayer and Missionary Union have furnished substantial means for the printing and distribution of gospel literature. Literature sent from the Scripture Gift Mission in England and the Pilgrim Tract Society have also been valuable aids in evangelistic work.

After only one year of Bible school training, a national worker has held twenty-two classes each week in various schools in the Saigon area

The Viet Nam missionary conference



and is constantly receiving invitations to teach in other schools.

Since the opening of the new bookroom on a busy street in Saigon a number of persons have accepted Christ. The number of inquirers and the amount of sales each week reveal the keen interest of the people in spiritual things.

The Chinese work in Viet Nam and Cambodia is now entirely self-supporting and self-governing. One Bible School student has given all

of his time in house-to-house visitation work, with a goal of reaching every Chinese family in Indo-China with the gospel. A piece of property has been obtained just outside of Saigon with a view to erecting buildings for short term Bible schools and children's summer camp.

Counting on prayer support from the homeland the Viet Nam Mission and their national colleagues are reaching out to garner the rich harvest which is set before them.

A Missionary's Soliloquy

By REV. WILLIAM E. BOYES

While returning from the Intermission Fellowship Retreat held in Quito, Ecuador, May, 1956, Rev. William E. Boyes, a missionary of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, gave vent to his feelings in this soliloquy. While written by a missionary, it should cause serious thought and prayer among ministers and laymen as well.—EDITOR.

THOUGH I can speak the foreign tongue like a national or can preach like a flaming evangel but do not speak in love, my message is empty.

If I can teach and educate people but do not realize that my object is to direct men's minds toward Christ, it would be better not to teach, because worldly wisdom is vain.

If I can heal bodies or pull teeth but do not understand that the most important part of my patient is his soul, it would be better to go home and have a good private practice.

If I can milk cows and show people how to farm but do not interest people by giving them the sincere milk of the Word, it would be better to leave farming to the Point Four Program.

If I can preach over the radio or know all the science of radio but do not realize that the vast radio audience is composed of individual souls that need salvation, it would be better to save the time spent and do something else in His work.

If I am a great administrator or a council member and can think through and solve all problems but do not remember that the missionaries and nationals with whom I deal are men and women as I am,

whose problems are physical, psychological and spiritual and who need patience and care in handling them, it would be better that I get a job in industry and run machines instead of men.

If I can work with the nationals and take them on great and wonderful evangelistic trips but really do not have love for lost men, it would be better for me to take a nice sight-seeing trip.

If I give all my property to the poor and never discipline the national, I am helping to make rice Christians instead of strong soldiers for Christ.

True love in missionary life and work is kind and considerate. Real love for mankind does not make me puffed up and feel that I alone am right.

True love for souls helps us bear with the national, suffer through our tribulations, believe that the Lord will make all come out right if we trust Him and Him alone.

This love hates sin but is patient in dealing with sinners and with those who err in their ways even though they be our fellow missionaries.

Love never fails. If I have a radio, it will get out of order; if

I have a car, it will get flat tires; if I have other instruments to help me preach, they may get rusty; but love will never fail.

I think I know how to do missionary work but really I know only in part and my work is only half done. But when I am really guided by the Holy Spirit and do my work in love, what I do will win souls into His kingdom and bring glory to Christ.

When I was a new missionary I felt that my method and my work was the only thing worth while and that the rest of the missionaries did not do much for the Lord. But when I became older and had more experience, my vision widened and I saw the usefulness of the methods of others. I saw that each and every missionary has a place to work and a part to play in the great task of building the Church of Jesus Christ.

At this time we cannot see the results of our combined efforts but eternity will reveal to us the importance of close coöperation in love.

And now we have radios, amplifiers, cars, camps, farms, hospitals, schools and many other things to help us spread the gospel, but we must admit that they will all perish and that only true wholesome love of God and man in our hearts will make our work last throughout eternity.

A True Spiritual Leader

By REV. N. H. BILLINGS, Africa

Recently the Lord gave us a little glimpse into the ministry of Lazare Kouassi, one of four January graduates of the Bible school at Bouake, Ivory Coast. During February he began to minister in his district but no one turned to God. In March he called the Christians together and asked if they would meet nightly for prayer.

After one week one man was converted. One by one others repented and believed until there are now thirteen new believers. Lazare has not only led them to Christ but is teaching them to walk in "Christ's road." I wish you could hear all the Scripture verses his people know by heart! We praise God that He has given us a part in training His Baouli servant, Lazare.

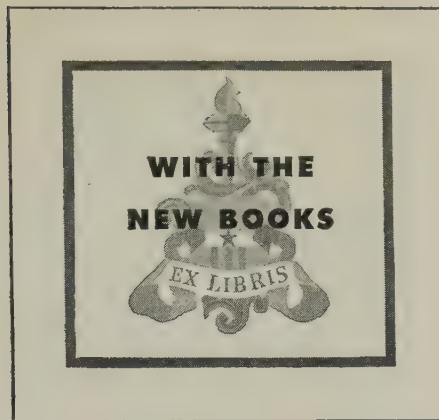
Understanding Needed

A REVIEW BY HELEN SIGRIST

When Iron Gates Yield, by Geoffrey T. Bull. Moody Press, Chicago, Ill. 254 pages, \$3.00.

Geoffrey Bull was a young and politically innocent English missionary who worked in the Chinese-Tibetan border area during the anxious days of intrigue before the Reds took over, and was imprisoned in China for three years. He had an eye for descriptive detail and too much sincerity to color the picture to give a better impression of himself or a blacker view of the men who were his enemies. He tells of his spiritual problems, of the increasing pressure of the brainwashing—perhaps the harder to endure without breaking because there were none of the physical torture devices that could be met with easy crisis-bravery. Meanwhile many were praying that he might be strengthened and released. God sustained him and opened the prison doors.

Could Mr. Bull have answered the Reds more cleverly and have saved himself all this trouble and perhaps even allowed to go on preaching in China or Tibet? Such a possibility has been suggested in Christian circles—not by anyone who has been brainwashed, nor yet by anyone with a profound knowledge of Communism. According to this view, he should have said that “the powers that be are ordained of God,” and promised to tell Christians that resisting Communism is resisting the ordinance of God. It would be interesting to know at exactly what point a Christian is spiritually bound to desert the government to which he has owed loyalty and leap to the Communist band wagon. At any rate, the Chinese Communists in their brainwashing made it clear that faith in God was itself a major crime—one that might be tolerated for a time in an illiterate peasant, but never could a foreigner be allowed to propagate that faith. A Christian being questioned might well say that he would obey the Communist government in all matters not touching his faith—but can he honestly promise to urge others to unconditionally support a government which he knows is founded on materialism and is committed to destroy faith? Communism is “ordained of God” in exactly the same sense that Satan and his demons are still permitted a limited freedom to war against God. Probably Geoffrey Bull could have answered better and withstood pressure a little easier if he had known beforehand what Communism is. He was greatly amazed at Red peace slogans. He was unprepared to face the prob-



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lems of attitude toward British imperialism. He was surprised at high moral standards among the young Communists. He did not know what to expect from Communist tactics. Yet he is not alone in this. It is pathetic to hear from Chinese missionaries how little they understood Communism as the threat was growing and how shocked they were at its victory.

Are our missionaries in Asia, India and Africa much better informed now? Do they know why a people can suddenly turn Communist—or rather, how they can accept Communist leadership? And what about American Christians? We dare not be indifferent to such things. *When Iron Gates Yield* is an excellent help toward the understanding we must have. It does not, however, answer for Christians all the important questions on Communism.

Servants of Apostasy, by Carl McIntire. Christian Beacon Press (1955), Collingswood, N. J. 414 pages, \$4.00.

The title of this book might mislead the intended reader. The table of contents would hardly add more to his approach to the content. The author, president of the International Council of Christian Churches, well known for his militant attitude toward the World Council of Churches, might however be expected to produce such a book.

This volume constitutes a highly documented report of the convocation of the World Council at Evanston, Ill. (August 15-31, 1954). The burden of the volume is based upon a single theme: an exposé of the “farce at Evanston.” It attempts to expose the absence of hope and unity in the World Council and the obvious presence of confusion and disaster to the Church which were observed. The book methodically attacks almost every-

thing and everybody who attended the Evanston gathering. The author decries the way that the President of the United States “used his good office to promote the ecumenical position.” Even Billy Graham comes in for his blast. He quotes the chairman of the Evanston Council (the Archbishop of Canterbury) as declaring, “We have done absolutely nothing and done it exceedingly well.” Although we are inclined to agree with McIntire’s position in the book, it is quite evident that he holds the World Council as the villain and his own International Council the hero. One is quite convinced after laboring through the contents of this book that the former may be true but not so convinced that the latter is valid. It must be conceded that the author is a master in applying both heat and light in his attacks on the enemy. A good source-book for those who are vitally interested in the unorthodoxy of the minutiae of Evanston.—DON KENYON.

Books in Brief

The Kings of Judah and Israel, by Christopher Knapp. Loizeaux Brothers, New York, N. Y. 294 pages, \$2.75.

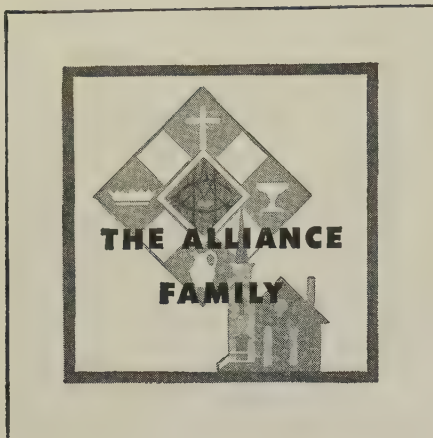
A reprint of a 1908 work that synthesizes the records of the kings of Judah and Israel from the two principal records, the books of the Kings and Chronicles.

The Speaker’s Treasury for Sunday School Teachers, by Herbert V. Prochnow. W. A. Wilde Co. (1955), Boston, Mass. 175 pages, \$2.50.

The title of this book matches that of a previous volume, *The Public Speaker’s Treasure Chest*. The editor is a layman who has been active in the work of the church and seems to have had considerable success as a public speaker. In this book he has gathered together many practical and valuable things from a variety of sources. What he offers here could prove to be a “treasure” if it is carefully mined and well invested.

Devotions for Juniors, by Ava Leach James. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 154 pages, \$2.00.

Mrs. James, a pastor’s wife and mother of three children, has prepared 146 short, appealing devotional thoughts for young readers. Each reading is limited to a page and is based on a verse of Scripture. The language, style and arrangement of the book are such that it will arouse the interest and command the attention of Juniors. The book is suitable for use in a group or for the individual child to read.



CLIFFORD E. HARROD, Reporter

News reports may be sent direct to Rev. C. E. Harrod, The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, East and Lane Streets, Raleigh, N. C.

On Furlough

Rev. and Mrs. B. A. Lofsted and children, Marilyn, Richard, Martha and Robert, arrived in Glendale, Calif., by plane on July 17 from Peru. The Lofsteds first went to the field in 1945 and are now home for their second furlough. They have been stationed at Trujillo, Peru.

Miss M. Pauline Roseberry, R.N., Rev. and Mrs. Gordon V. Chapman and children, Kenneth, Richard, Margaret and Timothy, and *Rev. and Mrs. Ivan E. Lay* and children, Carol, Paul and Rebekah, arrived in New York on July 19 by plane from Indonesia.

Miss Roseberry first went to the field in 1948, and is now home for her second furlough. She will be making her home at Scottdale, Ga.

The Chapmans first went to the field in 1952 and are now home for their first furlough. They are members of the Alliance Church in Victoria, B. C., Canada.

Mr. and Mrs. Lay began their ministry in 1952 and have now completed their first term of service. They will be living in Lansing, Mich., during furlough.

Rev. and Mrs. M. C. Allen and children, David and John, arrived in New York, July 25 by plane from Indonesia. The Allens, who are returning for their second furlough, first went to China in 1946 and in 1949 were transferred to Indonesia. They have been working in the Kayan River area of West Kalimantan.

The New Generation

On June 27, to *Rev. and Mrs. D. M. Loose*, Paris, France, a daughter, Laura Ann.

On July 10, to *Rev. and Mrs. Wayne Persons*, Bangkok, Thailand, a son, Larry Scott.

Youth Stirred in Arizona

The presence of the Lord was very real in the Bible conference held in Pepper Sauce Canyon, Ariz., July 2-8. The Spirit-anointed messages of Rev. C. C.

Eamigh, missionary to Ecuador, and Rev. James E. Davey, of Pasadena, Calif., had a great effect on the young people. Many sought the Lord for salvation. At the fireside service on Saturday night many young people expressed their desire for the full will of God in their lives. On Sunday afternoon several of them were baptized. The behaviour of the young people was so fine that the camp caretaker did not consider it necessary to take inventory at the close of the conference. The faculty feel sure that decisions made in this conference will result in lives dedicated to future service for the Lord.

Avis Church Burns Mortgage

On July 1 the Avis (Pa.) Gospel Tabernacle burned its parsonage mortgage, thus freeing the church from indebtedness. The following pastors from area Alliance churches were present: Rev. Ernest Grames, Jersey Shore, who read the Scripture; Rev. T. Clark Latshaw, Lock Haven, who prayed; Rev. R. S. Jarrett, East End Williamsport, who represented the District Executive Committee; Rev. Franklin Ballard, Williamsport, and Rev. Ellwood Zopfi, Oak Grove, Williamsport.

Members of the board and the pastor, Rev. Alfred W. Carl, also took part in the ceremony. Rev. W. C. Neff, Lewistown, former pastor under whose ministry the parsonage was purchased, brought a stirring message.

Alliance Chaplain Ordered to Korea

Chaplain (Major) Earl F. McNayr, who for several years has been engaged in service at Fort Devens, Mass., has recently received orders to report on November 6, 1956, to the air base in Oakland, Calif., from which point he will leave for a Korean assignment. He is expected to serve there for about sixteen months.

Let us pray for all our chaplains, and for Chaplain McNayr in particular as he completes his ministry at Fort Devens and undertakes the important Korean assignment.

Available for Evangelistic Meetings

Rev. Otto F. Schenk, evangelist of the Northeastern District, writes that he has some open dates for 1957. Those desiring his ministry may contact him at 1012 Irving St., Olean, N. Y.

Camden Church Relocates

The Camden (N. J.) Alliance church recently moved from the Stewart Street location to 6829 Waldorf Ave., Pennsauken, a suburb of Camden. The newly acquired property includes a two-apartment parsonage valued at more than \$30,000 and a new church which seats 100 persons.

The church was an old warehouse before the men of the congregation remodeled and renovated it into the attractive chapel it now is, with steeple and chimes. The congregation hopes to build a larger church and a Sunday school unit in the near future.

Letters

A Way to Keep in Touch

THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY has been a great blessing to me and I dislike missing single issue. As I am a Nyack graduate (Class of '48) some of the articles are written by those I am personally acquainted with, and these articles find special place in my heart. And, of course, the Alliance Family section is always read with much interest. As soon as I finish each copy, I give it to a Christian college library. Thus your paper is not only blessing to me but to many young lives. MISS VOLENA WILSON, Kotagiri, South India.

The pastor, Mr. David C. Shepsom reports that the entire property, parsonage and church building, was purchased for considerably less than the value of the parsonage alone. A formal dedication was held on May 27, with Rev. L. J. Isch, Sr., District Superintendent, present as the guest speaker.

Beaver Valley Women Meet

Representatives of eleven prayer bands of the Beaver Valley, Pa., area met for a rally at the Suncrest Camp on June 28. Miss Phyllis Taylor, of Belgium Congo, spoke.

Mrs. Floyd C. McFarland, chairman of the rally, reports that the area prayer bands last year supplied spreads for the missionary children's home in Quito, Ecuador, and are now working on a similar project for the receiving home in Boma, Congo.

Successful VBS in Columbus

Mrs. William Kadle, who with her husband directed the Vacation Bible School of the Third Avenue Alliance Church, Columbus, Ohio, June 11-22, reports a total enrollment of 221 and daily average attendance of 150. On decision day about thirty children professed salvation. The closing program was given on the final Sunday night of the two-week school. A fine display of handwork was reviewed by those present.

Named Pastor-Emeritus

Rev. E. C. Swanson was made pastor emeritus of the Alliance church in Santa Rosa, Calif., at a ceremony in the church June 24. Mr. Swanson has served as superintendent in the Northwestern District, president of St. Paul Bible Institute, and as pastor in Santa Rosa and Santa Monica, Calif.

Hymnals Needed

There is a call for about a dozen copies of *Hymns of the Christian Life*, 1, 2, & Combined ("the old red hymnal"). If any of our readers have any of which they can dispose, please write us to that effect. Address your letter to THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY, 260 West 44th St., New York 36, N. Y.

Sunday

DAILY READING—Colossians 4:12-18.

DAILY TEXT—"Epaphras, . . . a servant of Christ, . . . always labouring fervently for you in prayers" (verse 1).

This beloved brother was a member of the Colossian church, and in the testimony that Paul bears to him he shows that he is appealing to the people that are acquainted with him and that mere idle words have little weight unless his life bears out the testimony. The ministry of Epaphras was the power of prayer, that silent ministry that the world knows nothing of, but which counts in heaven. It is the work of our great High Priest above, and it is perhaps, the most potent work that any of us do below. It is no easy dream of sentimental feeling, but a strong and peaceful energy "labouring fervently for you in prayers." This is the power that stands behind every great spiritual movement. The world may see the man who stands upon a platform or leads the advance movement on the field, but mightier than either is the silent heart that wrestles in the closet and brings the power from on high. —B. SIMPSON.

Monday

DAILY READING—Luke 13:1-17.

DAILY TEXT—"Except ye repent, ye will all likewise perish" (verse 5).

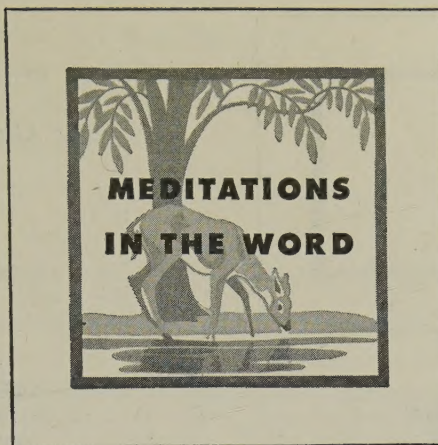
God did not finish salvation on the cross. He finished the provision for salvation on the cross; but our salvation is a present work of an infinite God under the provision of Calvary, in response to faith on the part of the receiving subject. The faith by which we are saved . . . cannot be exercised by any one of us until our adjustments to the known sin and to all the known will of God are perfectly made by the use of our own free will. Salvation in its every part is a moral transaction. It is the moral value of the sufferings of Christ that made the provision complete. The reception of the benefits of that provision is conditioned upon the moral attitudes and choices of the receiving subject. No man can believe and be saved while willfully allowing his sin to continue in his life. When men turn to Calvary they choose to cease the sinning business completely. —W. W. BUTLER.

Tuesday

DAILY READING—Joshua 10:16-27.

DAILY TEXT—"Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings" (verse 1).

The cave became their grave. There was a royal funeral that night, and the kings ceased troubling forever. See this picture! The king of Jerusalem! Jerusalem means peace and Hebron means lowliness. Then there was Jarmuth, which means height, and Lachish under Sennacherib, and Eglon under Deborah. Now these at least give me a picture of our



Compiled by EDITH M. BEYERLE

peace, our prayer life, our position in the heavenlies, our profession of Christ and our pastures in His Word. The coalition of enemies is out to rob us of all these rich things. . . . Put your feet on their necks. There is the adventure of faith. The very God of peace bruised Satan under your feet. Here is our certainty of victory. Our Victor Lord defeated this enemy of ours at the cross, and bids us put our feet where He has put His and enter into His victory. If you will put your feet, by faith and obedience, where He put His He will hold you victorious and you will stand more than conqueror through Him who loved you.—W. T. HINDLEY.

Wednesday

DAILY READING—Psalm 37:1-11.

DAILY TEXT—"Rest in the Lord" (verse 7).

O God, I will be still!
No softer place on earth to rest,
But on Thy breast!
No sweeter voice nor calm,
To soothe Thy child's alarm.

O God, I will lie still!
This will of mine so keen to say,
"I want my way,"
I yield it all to Thee
Who seest the end for me.

O God, I will lie still!
In attitude of perfect peace,
There troubles cease,
And leaning on Thy breast,
My soul finds peace and rest.
—CHARYS E. BEGBIE.

Thursday

DAILY READING—John 5:36-47.

DAILY TEXT—"Search the scriptures" (verse 39).

A poor French shepherd who had bought an old Bible discovered one day that several of its leaves were pasted together. Separating them he found a bank bill for five hundred francs (worth at that time \$95.00), accompanied by this will and testament: "I gathered together this money with very great difficulty, and having none as my natural heirs except those who already need

nothing, I make thee, whosoever shall read this Bible, my heir." In every copy of God's Word there are treasures richer than those that were found by the shepherd. Is it not a perpetual marvel that men are not searching for them day and night? Just as successive generations in ignorance of their rich resources till the ground in the soil of which lie valuable deposits of silver and gold, so men toil and weep and pass away, ignorant of the riches within God's revelation—better than thousands of gold and silver.—CHRIST LIFE.

Friday

DAILY READING—2 Kings 2:18-25.

DAILY TEXT—"The situation . . . is pleasant, . . . but the water is naught, and the ground barren" (verse 19).

How often this is true of situations other than those catalogued under the physical or material. Things seem to be pleasant and all one could wish, but in reality they prove only to be cursed with a scarcity of refreshment and a barrenness of soul. The human heart in its weakness and inability to differentiate between the false and the true is easily deceived, and what appears to be pleasantness proves only poverty; what looks like blessing is only barrenness! Moses was not so easily misled in his calculations even in his young manhood, and that which appealed to the natural as bringing prestige and power in earthly estimation was relinquished for the reality of heavenly inheritance. "Not all is gold that glitters" may be applied to "situations" as well as anything else, and happy the man who recognizes pure gold when he sees it, and acts accordingly. When the acid test of the judgment is applied, his will be the richer reward.—PAMEN.

Saturday

DAILY READING—Philippians 4:1-9.

DAILY TEXT—"Be careful for nothing" (verse 6).

Faith is simply looking unto Jesus. It is the helpless, needy, tempted soul, conscious of its own weakness and utter inability to cope with the difficulties all about it and therefore looking away from all these things to God alone as its source of strength and deliverance. Faith thus looks to God, but anxiety looks to things. Anxiety turns the soul's gaze away from God to the circumstances about us. It causes us to plan and brood about the multitude of things that seek to harass us. In so doing we get our eyes off God. And this is to lose the attitude of faith. . . . "Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net," says the wise psalmist. So long as he keeps looking unto God, God will take care of the nets and pitfalls which are spread in his pathway. This is the walk of faith. But when he himself begins to try to manage the nets and pitfalls and look away from God, he begins to be filled with anxious care, and this is ruinous to faith.—JAMES H. MCCONKEY.

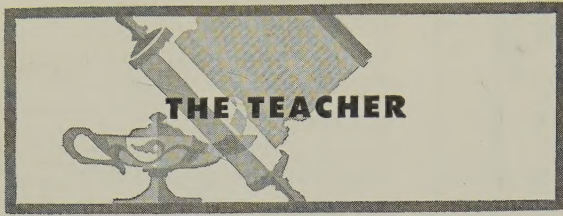
SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON—AUGUST 19, 1956

The Grounds of Christian Assurance

1 John 3:19–4:6

GOLDEN TEXT

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith"—1 JOHN 5: 4.



BACKGROUND AND LESSON ORIENTATION

Because the believer lives in a world of moral untruth and wickedness, he must at the outset of his walk with God take the position of a militant aggressor. He is given the assurance that he is able to overcome all of his enemies. Each message should be put to the test. Its source is the stamp of its validity. The betraying element of Antichrist is doctrinal. The Holy Spirit has engifted certain members of the Body to perform the function of defining truth as against error. In John's day the test of truth was an unhesitating declaration of the incarnation of Christ. The main purpose for inscribing divine revelation was to put down an authoritative statement of truth. Written truth is not misquoted without a clear malicious intent. The spirit of love is as essential as pure doctrine. John exposes the spirit of hate (4:7, 8).

SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE

1. *Confidence is born of obedience*—1 John 3:19-22.
2. *Faith in Christ brings confidence*—1 John 3:23, 24.
3. *The test of truth and error*—1 John 4:1-6.

KEY WORD ANALYSIS

(1) "Dwelleth"—*menie* (3:24). This simple word is common in John's writings. Here it means to go on remaining in Him. The things we embrace when we come to Christ are not subject to change. We remain in Him as He is. Unbroken fellowship depends upon constant obedience. The Holy Spirit is the witness of this union (v. 24).

(2) "Try the spirits"—*dokimazete ta pneumata* (4:1). There is no distinctive word in Greek for the Holy Spirit. The context must tell what "spirit" is meant. Here the believer is admonished to be very cautious in the presence of false prophets. Discernment of untruth is a gift of the Spirit, but all believers may test the veracity of truth with the Word.

COMMENTARY ON THE PRINTED TEXT

1. *Confidence is born of obedience* (1 John 3:19-22).

The "hereby" found here is the point of contextual association. It refers to "love" in verse 18. Loving in deed and in truth relates our spiritual existence to its source in truth. Relate this to James 1:18: "begat he us with the word of truth."

Assurance is born out of our obedience to God in our conduct and in our attitude toward His will. Heart condemnation comes from not doing or being what He requires. This verse places the omniscience of God above the accusations of conscience. If our heart condemns us it is because some failure known to God has brought upon us this condemnation. A clean heart is never a condemned heart. There is no loophole to be found here for ignoring the prick of a condemning conscience. It makes us aware of the necessity of heeding it. No man is ever conscious of sin he has not committed. If our

depraved conscience should accuse of guilt how much greater is God than our conscience. Obedience brings peace. Today's tendency is to strip Christianity of the need of being holy in deed. Ethics is the essence of sainthood.

2. *Faith in Christ brings confidence* (1 John 3:23, 24).

Man's greatest responsibility is to believe on the name of God's Son. The next greatest is to "love one another." This ancient admonition given to Israel at the birth of that nation has never been repudiated. "Thou shalt love . . ." Jesus gave it new force and meaning (Matt. 22:36-38). Paul summarized Old Testament revelation with this concept of Christian obligation (Rom. 13:9, 10). This sign alone constitutes the unimpeachable evidence of a regenerated man (v. 24a). This fact alone gives us personal confidence in our union with Christ (v. 24b).

3. *The test of truth and error* (1 John 4:1-6).

The Christian is warned against be-

ing gullible. How shrewd we become in material affairs and how easily we are taken in with religious deviation! The world is filled with peddlers of pious poison and they are doing a thriving business. The need of knowledge of the Word of God and the discernment of the Holy Spirit is apparent. In John's day the great test of orthodoxy was belief in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. In any day the overcomer of the world is the true child of God. In this we are a marked people.

Overcoming is the evidence that the believer is indwelt by One who is stronger than himself (v. 4). The worldling deals in worldliness and is therefore heard and appreciated by those who are of the world. The saint deals with godliness and is heard and appreciated by those who are godly (vv. 5, 6). This fact, according to John the Beloved, is the absolute test of truth and error. God give us wisdom to discern this in our day! A man's willingness to hear truth and act upon it was Christ's own test of wisdom.

be conceived as *dispensational*. Such theological maneuvering will result in destroying the person who tries it. It certainly will never alter the facts. Proof of godliness is purity of life, then, now and evermore.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR LESSON PREPARATION

The teacher should study the eventful days of Israel's beginnings in Deuteronomy and then sense the initial demands of God for His people. Ethics as introduced by God can never

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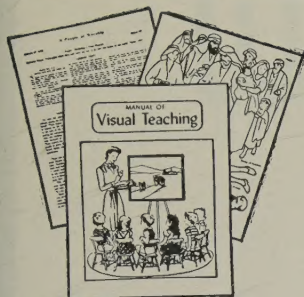
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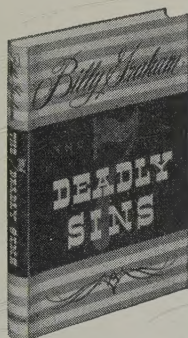
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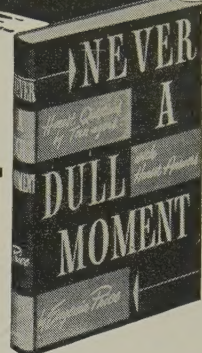


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ALLIANCE MISSIONS ON THE MARCH



Children make ceramics—and hear the gospel A. MARTIN

Jewish Youth Attentive to the Gospel

IN TWO large cities where there are concentrations of Jewish people, The Christian and Missionary Alliance is having an effective ministry among them. In the work of both The Messianic Center in the Bronx, New York City, and The Alliance Jewish Fellowship in Philadelphia, there is a noticeable abatement in the prejudice which usually makes difficult the reaching of Jewish people for Christ.

In past years there has been almost no fruit among children in the Bronx because parents were reluctant to expose their little ones to the gospel. Lately this phase of the work has become the most flourishing. On three different days of the week classes are held; the total enrollment is sixty and the average attendance is twenty-six. A visual aid popular with them is the flannelgraph. Through this fascinating novelty is being awakened an avid interest in the Scriptures. The children delight in singing joyous gospel songs which are quite different from Jewish sacred music. A time in each class period is devoted to handwork. At present ceramics is the subject and the children are eager pupils. Members of the staff are rejoicing in the unique opportunity the Lord has given them to make such contacts for Him.

In the two and a half years since the center in Philadelphia was opened, six young people have accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour. Two of them have yielded their lives to the Lord for full-time service and will be entering an Alliance Bible school in September. Response among teen-agers has been particularly gratifying. They gladly take part in the various activities arranged for them and then give close attention to the gospel. Their interest in studying the Bible is keen and their questions sincere.

Testimonies recorded on tape may be borrowed for use in prayer bands, young people's societies or other groups, to help enlist prayer on behalf of Jewish work. Monthly prayer letters from each center are mailed to friends who request them. Write to

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